

of the affected countries living in the United States, while examining on an urgent basis recommendations for further relief, consistent with the recommendation Mrs. Gore made to me.

A storm shows no respect for boundaries, and we should respond the same way. Many American citizens have relatives in Central America; our nations are related, too. They are our friends and our neighbors. We are going to share the future together. America is at its best when lending a helping hand to friends in need. Central Americans have taken great strides in the last decade in ending conflicts and strengthening democracies. We must not, and we will not, let a hurricane drown these aspirations.

The United States will spare no aid to people of Central America, our fellow Americans, as we all strive to build a better world in a new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:59 p.m. on November 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 14. This transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

### **Memorandum on Emergency Disaster Relief for Central America** *November 14, 1998*

Presidential Determination No. 99-04

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the  
Secretary of Defense*

*Subject:* Drawdown Under Section 506(a)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the Foreign Assistance Act to Provide Emergency Disaster Relief Assistance for Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 506(a)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended ("the Act"), 22 U.S.C. 2318(a)(2), I hereby determine that it is in the national interest of the United States to draw down articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense, for the purpose of providing international disaster relief assistance

to Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Therefore, I direct the drawdown of up to \$45 million of articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense for the Governments of Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala for the purposes and under the authorities of chapter 9 of part I of the Act.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**William J. Clinton**

### **Statement on the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church** *November 14, 1998*

On this International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, I want to reaffirm my administration's strong commitment to religious freedom around the world.

Today, in solidarity with millions of people at home and abroad, we pray for those who suffer for their beliefs—a suffering forewarned by Scripture: ". . . they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you . . . [you will be] brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake." But with this warning comes the promise, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to deny or resist." (Luke 21:12).

My administration worked closely with Members of Congress and the U.S. religious community to secure passage of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, which is an important addition to our ongoing efforts to make the promotion of religious freedom a national priority and an integral part of our foreign policy.

On this day, when we keep in our thoughts the noble struggle for religious freedom of people of all backgrounds, whether Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Baha'i, or of any other faith, we remember the words of the American Founding Father James Madison, who called religious liberty the "luster of our country." And we pray that our devotion to religious tolerance will serve as a beacon for all people everywhere who yearn for spiritual freedom.

## **Remarks on the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange With Reporters**

*November 15, 1998*

**The President.** Good morning. Last night Iraq agreed to meet the demands of the international community to cooperate fully with the United Nations weapons inspectors. Iraq committed to unconditional compliance. It rescinded its decisions of August and October to end cooperation with the inspectors. It withdrew its objectionable conditions. In short, Iraq accepted its obligation to permit all activities of the weapons inspectors, UNSCOM and the IAEA, to resume in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the U.N. Security Council.

The United States, together with Great Britain, and with the support of our friends and allies around the world, was poised to act militarily if Iraq had not reversed course. Our willingness to strike, together with the overwhelming weight of world opinion, produced the outcome we preferred: Saddam Hussein reversing course, letting the inspectors go back to work without restrictions or conditions.

As I have said since this crisis began, the return of the inspectors, if they can operate in an unfettered way, is the best outcome because they have been, and they remain, the most effective tool to uncover, destroy, and prevent Iraq from rebuilding its weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them.

Now, let me be clear: Iraq has backed down, but that is not enough. Now Iraq must live up to its obligations.

Iraq has committed to unconditionally resume cooperation with the weapons inspectors. What does that mean? First, Iraq must resolve all outstanding issues raised by UNSCOM and the IAEA. Second, it must give inspectors unfettered access to inspect and to monitor all sites they choose with no restrictions or qualifications, consistent with the memorandum of understanding Iraq itself signed with Secretary-General Annan in February. Third, it must turn over all relevant documents. Fourth, it must accept all weapons of mass destruction-related resolutions. Fifth, it must not interfere with the

independence or the professional expertise of the weapons inspectors.

Last night, again, I confirmed with the U.N. Security-General, Kofi Annan, that he shares these understandings of Iraq's obligations.

In bringing on this crisis, Iraq isolated itself from world opinion and opinion in the region more than at any time since the Gulf war. The United Nations Security Council voted 15-0 to demand that Saddam Hussein reverse course. Eight Arab nations—Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, five other Gulf states—warned Saddam that Iraq alone would bear responsibility for the consequences of defying the United Nations. The world spoke with one voice: Iraq must accept once and for all that the only path forward is complete compliance with its obligations to the world. Until we see complete compliance, we will remain vigilant; we will keep up the pressure; we will be ready to act.

This crisis also demonstrates, unfortunately, once again, that Saddam Hussein remains an impediment to the well-being of his people and a threat to the peace of his region and the security of the world. We will continue to contain the threat that he poses by working for the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction capability under UNSCOM, enforcing the sanctions and the no-fly zone, responding firmly to any Iraqi provocations.

However, over the long term, the best way to address that threat is through a Government in Baghdad—a new Government—that is committed to represent and respect its people, not repress them, that is committed to peace in the region. Over the past year we have deepened our engagement with the forces of change in Iraq, reconciling the two largest Kurdish opposition groups, beginning broadcasts of a Radio Free Iraq throughout the country. We will intensify that effort, working with Congress to implement the Iraq Liberation Act, which was recently passed, strengthening our political support to make sure the opposition—or to do what we can to make the opposition a more effective voice for the aspirations of the Iraqi people.

Let me say again, what we want and what we will work for is a Government in Iraq that represents and respects its people, not